



Swing Shift Ruffles

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TOOLS:

- [Iron \(1\)](#)
- [Marker \(1\)](#)
- [Paper \(1\)](#)
[a roll of paper works best.](#)
- [Ruler \(1\)](#)
[or T-square.](#)
- [Safety pin \(1\)](#)
- [Scissors \(1\)](#)
- [Sewing machine \(1\)](#)
- [Straight pins \(1\)](#)



PARTS:

- [Muslin \(1\)](#)
- [Elastic \(1\)](#)
[amount depends on your sizing.](#)
- [Fabric \(1\)](#)
[of your choice amount depends on your sizing.](#)

SUMMARY

This project is like learning to make a whole closet full of skirts and dresses. Follow the steps and you'll have a simple dress or skirt that is endlessly alterable.

For the dress, you can make it as a halter, with shoulder ties, with straps, or strapless.

The skirt is made with a simple elastic waistband, but is brought up a notch with the addition of circular ruffles, which are incredibly easy to make in the length of your choice. Make them

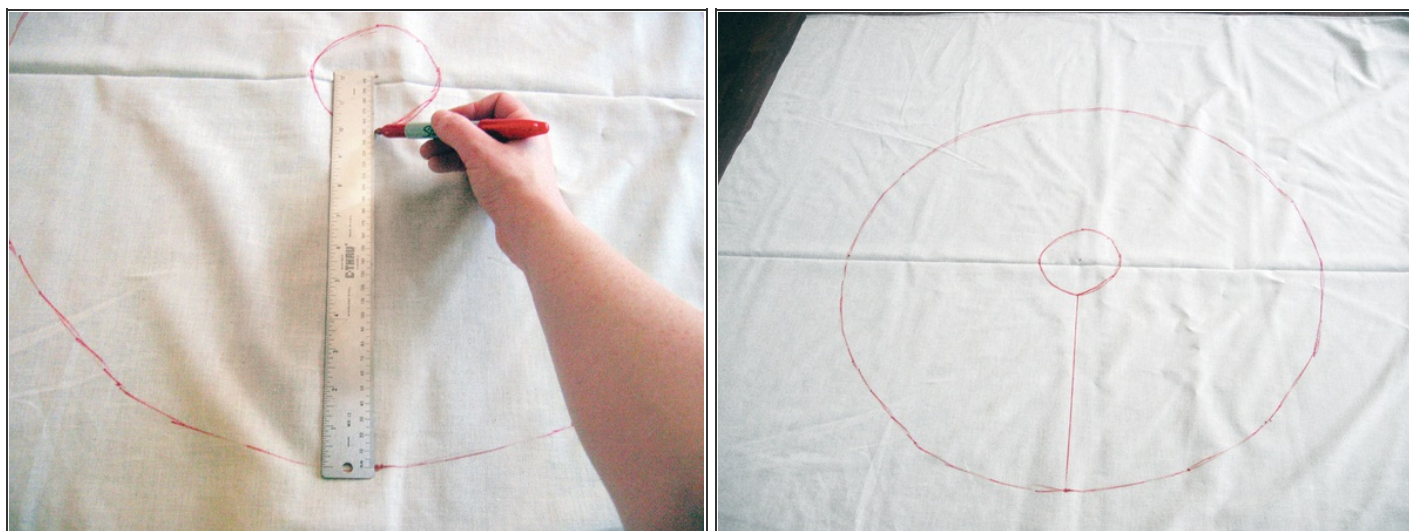
long for a full flounce, or make them short and sweet — it's completely up to you. And once you learn how easy it is to make ruffles, you'll be putting them everywhere.

Step 1 — Make a ruffle pattern.



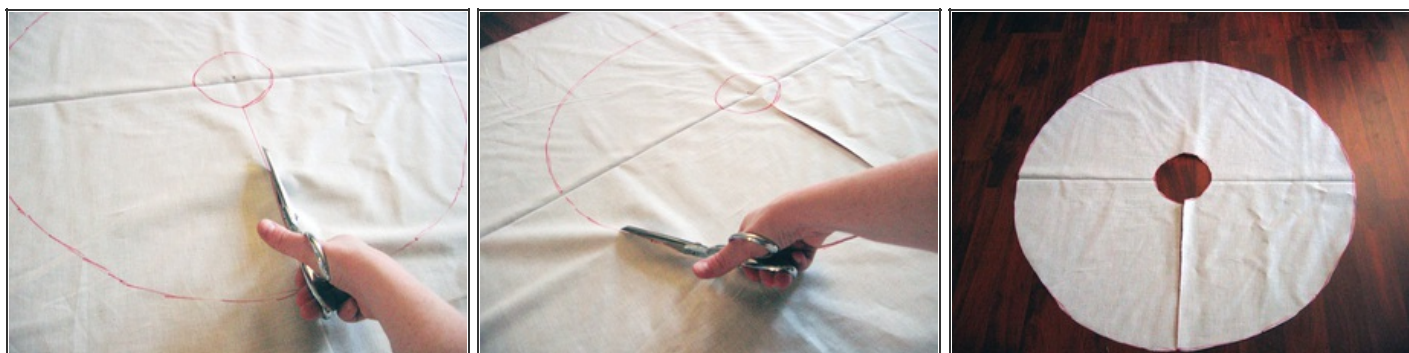
- To make a circle pattern (donut-shaped) for the ruffle, determine how long you'd like your ruffles to hang. To make the ruffles the same size as I have, use the following measurements. For the large ruffles on the dress: 25" diameter with a 7"-diameter center circle. For the small ruffles on the skirt: 10" diameter with a 3 1/2"-diameter center circle.
- Using either muslin or paper to create your ruffle pattern, make a mark for the center of the circle. Measure out from this center point to where you want the outer circle to be, and mark dots in equal distance from this center point. Connect these dots to make a circle.
- Marking from the same center point, measure the distance for a center circle. Again, mark dots in equal distance from the center point and then connect the dots to make the center circle.

Step 2

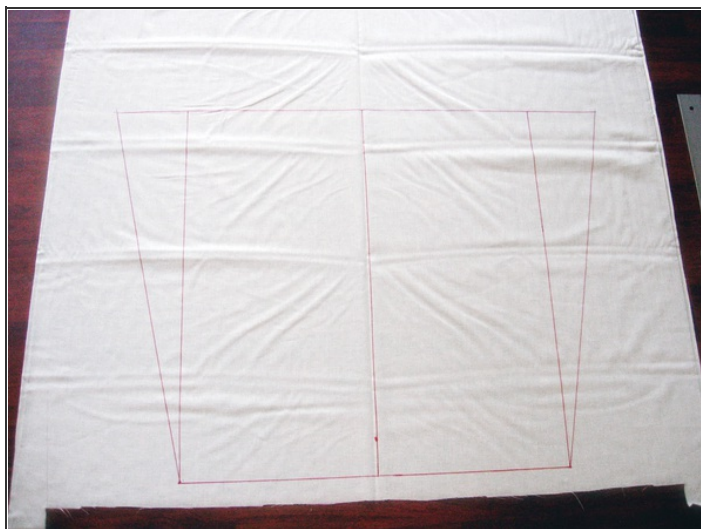


- Using a ruler, make a straight line to connect the small center circle to the outside larger circle. Now you should have what looks like a donut with a line on one side.

Step 3



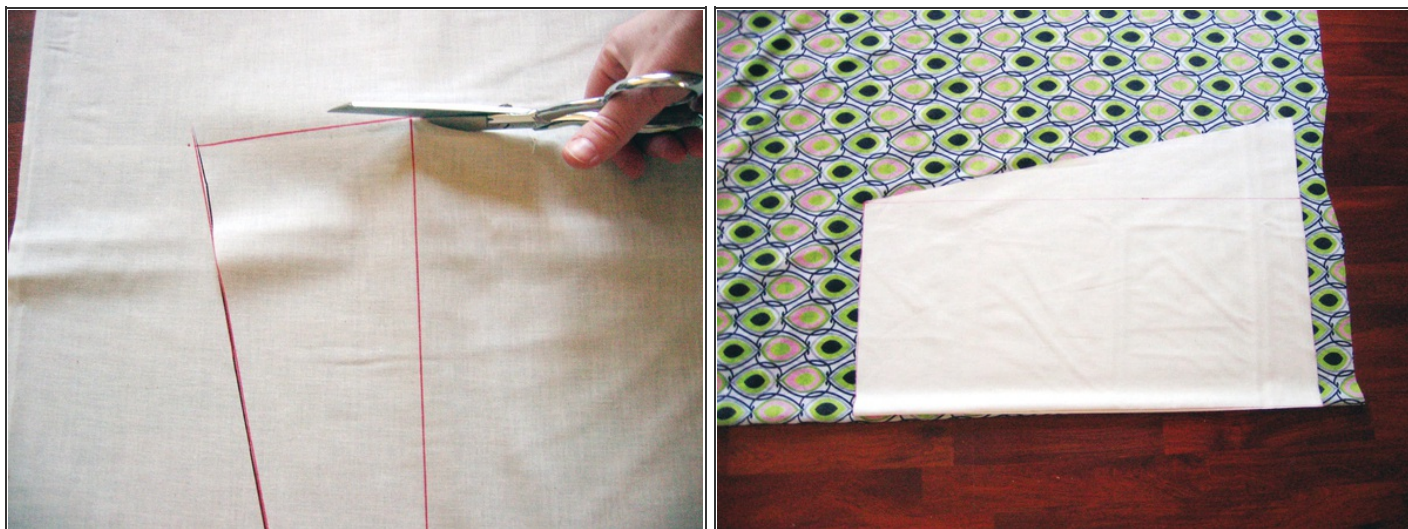
- Following the line you just drew, cut along to the center circle. Next, cut along the outside circle, then around the small center circle. Now you have a circle ruffle pattern.
- Pin the pattern to your fabric and cut around the outside of the large circle, then cut the center circle and the line that connects the 2. Open the ruffle so that the center circle becomes a straight line, and you'll see how the center circle becomes the top of the ruffle, and the rest flows down to make the flounce.

Step 4 — Make the dress/skirt pattern.

Size	Top width	Bottom width	Length
Extra Small	23"	35"	25"
Small	25"	36"	26"
Medium	27"	38"	27"
Large	29"	40"	28"

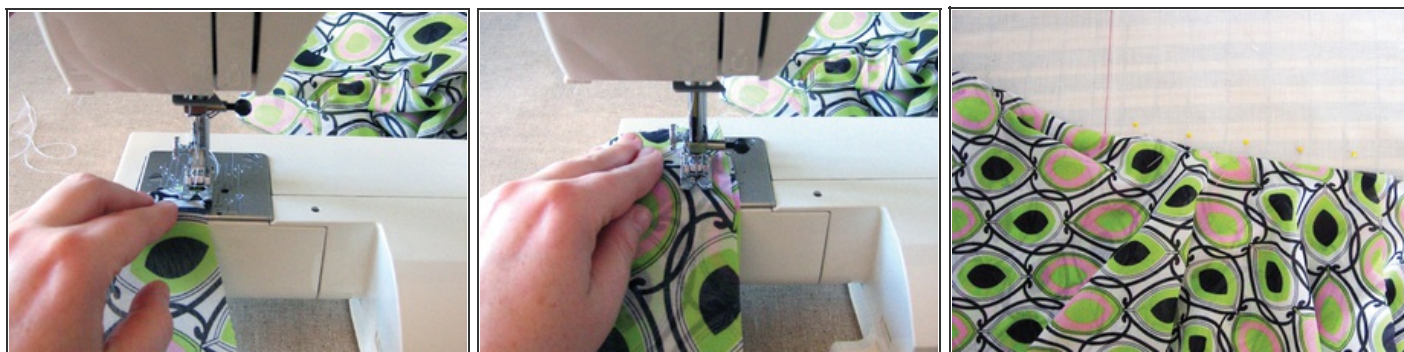
- The basis for both the skirt and dress is a simple A-line shift dress. It isn't fitted, so sizing is quite easy. The versions I've made for the project are for a size small. Use the measurements in image 2 to make your dress or skirt look like these.
- These measurements are for 1/2 of the dress or skirt. You'll be making 2 pieces and sewing them together at the side seams.
- To make the pattern, measure out the top width using a ruler and marker. Find the center point of the top width. From that point, measure and mark down the length of your choice. Do the same from each end point of the top width. You should now have what looks like a big E.
- Take your bottom width and cut the number in half. Measure and mark that half measurement on either side of the center point along the bottom width. Using a ruler, connect the corners of the top width to the bottom width.

Step 5

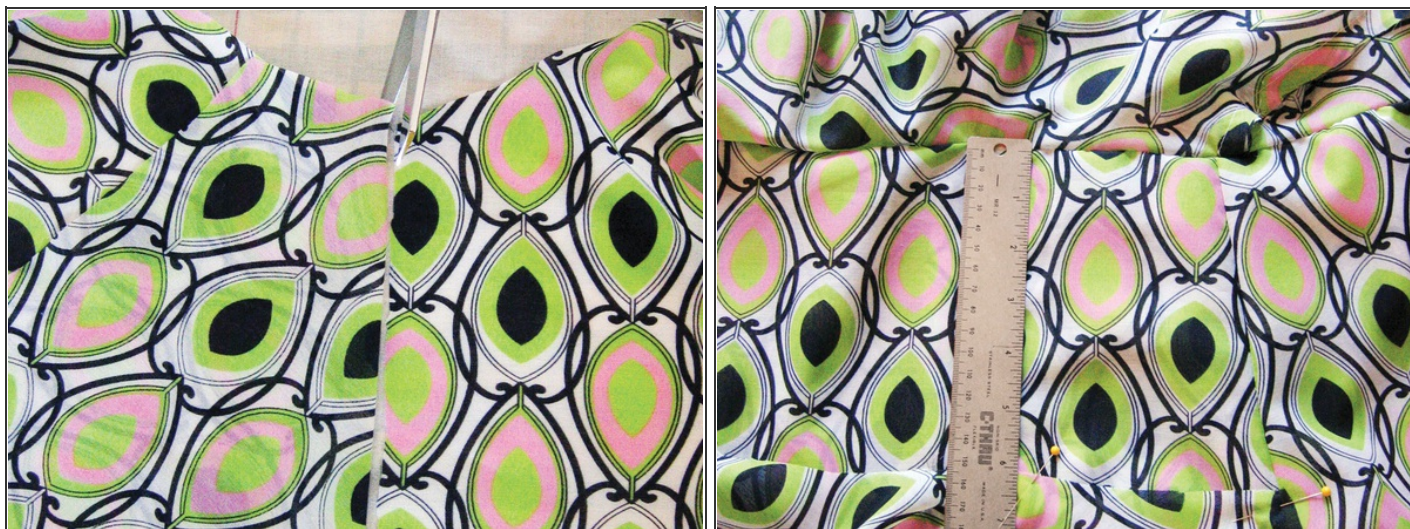


- Cut out the dress and skirt pattern by cutting around the outside lines. This is 1/2 of your dress or skirt. The front and back of the dress/skirt are mirror images, so to cut out the pieces, place the pattern on your fabric and cut it out twice. You can fold your pattern in half and place it on the fold of your fabric to save cutting.

Step 6 — Sew the dress/skirt with ruffles.



- Using a zigzag stitch, finish off all raw edges of the cut fabric you'll be using. Then line up your 2 pieces, right sides facing, and stitch the side seams together using a straight stitch and a 5/8" seam allowance.
- It may take multiple ruffle circles joined at the short ends to go around your garment. Eyeball how many it might take, and connect them on the ends with right sides facing. For my examples, I used 5 ruffles on the dress at its widest point, and 7 ruffles on the skirt at its widest point. Once you have as many joined as needed, with the wrong side of the ruffle facing the right side of the dress or skirt, line up the top of your ruffle with the top edge of the dress or skirt and pin in place.

Step 7

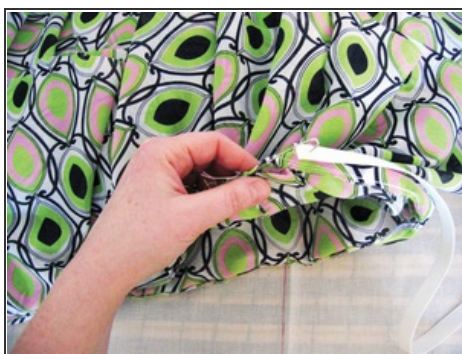
- When you go around the whole top and the 2 short ends meet, you might have some ruffle left over. If so, fold back 1 side and trim, leaving yourself the 5/8" seam allowance to attach the 2 ends together. Stitch the 2 short ends together, right sides facing, and pin to the dress.
- Stitch the ruffle to the top of the dress with a straight stitch. Press up the hem of the ruffle and stitch in place with a straight stitch. Flip up the ruffle and measure from the seam down to where you'd like to sew the next ruffle. There are no rules on how close or far it needs to be. This is all up to you and will depend on how long your ruffles are. For the dress, I placed the ruffles 6" below, so there would be 3" overlapping. Pin the ruffle to the dress, and repeat to attach and finish the next ruffle.

Step 8



- Repeat for each additional ruffle, until you've attached as many as you'd like.
- Press up the hem of the dress or skirt and stitch in place with a straight stitch. Fold the top of the dress or skirt down 1 1/2", including the ruffle, into the inside of the garment, and press. Lifting the ruffle out of the way, pin the fold down to the inside of the garment. Starting at 1 side seam, stitch around the bottom of the fold with a straight stitch, leaving a 1" opening from where you started.
- Be very careful not to sew the ruffle while doing this.

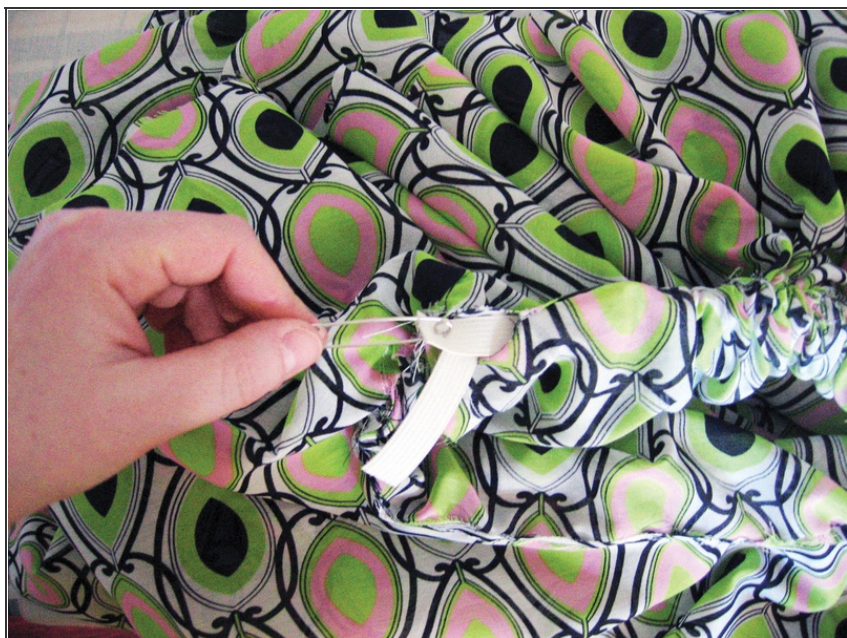
Step 9 — Add elastic.



	Extra Small	Small	Medium	Large
Dress	27"	28"	29"	30"
Skirt	25"	26"	27"	28"

- Cut the 1/2" elastic to fit either your bust or your waist, depending on whether you're making a skirt or a dress. For this garment, I recommend using the measurements in image 3 as a guide.
- Attach a large safety pin to 1 end of your elastic and feed it through the 1" hole you left in the casing.

Step 10



- Push the elastic around the entire garment. Be careful not to twist the elastic or lose the other end in the casing. Pull the elastic out, and pin to the other end, overlapping about 1". Sew the 2 ends together using a zigzag stitch, then fit the elastic into the casing. Close up the hole with a straight stitch.
- To wear, flip the top with the elastic to the inside of the dress or skirt, so the ruffle appears to come out from the inside seamlessly. Adjust the gathering on the ruffles, and you're done!

This project first appeared in [CRAFT Volume 08](#), pages 90-96.

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